

Guide to Ceremonial Wedding Music

Your wedding ceremony is one of the most romantic events in your life -- music can and should be a big part of it. Music plays a crucial part of setting the tone for the ceremony, and has the power to convey your feelings and personality to your guests. Whether you've dreamed of walking down the aisle to the traditional "Here Comes the Bride" or the Beatles' "In My Life," music is a wonderful way to personalize your ceremony. Without a doubt, your choice of music will create a lasting impression that people remember for years to come.

We hope this guide will be of help to you as you consider your choices of music. Please keep in mind that we are not limited to the selections listed below. This guide serves as a starting point and includes the most widely accepted pieces for wedding ceremonies. To further assist you in this process, song titles that are marked with an asterisk (*) can be heard on our wedding sampler CD.

Whatever music you choose, remember to first check with your officiant: He or she may uphold religious restrictions. Should potential issues arise, many officiants are able to recommend suitable substitutes. Also, find out if there are any restrictions on hiring musicians. Some venues may have exclusive arrangements with in-house personnel.

Marrying outdoors? Make sure your musicians are sheltered. Direct exposure to sun on a hot summer day makes performers in tuxes very uncomfortable; and on the other hand, rain can end the performance. A tent or awning, or any covered or shaded area should do the trick. If the ceremony is to be held in a public place, be sure to check if there are time-of-day or noise restrictions that apply.

Need more help finding ideas for music? If appropriate, take direction from the ceremony site's architecture and decor. Is it a gothic cathedral or English garden? Also, consider the following thoughts: Broadway show tunes or movie theme songs can make a big, bold statement and express romance, too. Ethnic selections reflect your heritage and honor your families. Jazz offers contemporary sophistication. Pop genres offer many romantic songs. You may find a song that features the bride's name in the title, or a song with special meaning such as the favorite tune of a deceased family member. When in doubt, call us. We are happy to arrange a consultation via phone, email, or in person.

Once you have made your decisions, we invite you to complete the attached Ceremonial Music set list or submit one on-line at our website. We look forward to hearing from you!

Best Wishes,
Brass Unlimited



At minimum, there are three parts of the wedding ceremony where music is traditionally incorporated: A prelude as guests are being seated, the processional, and of course, the recessional. Optional music may include an interlude (i.e. candle lighting, etc.) and postlude as guests leave.

The musical selections below are categorized by the portion of the ceremony in which they are most often heard, but keep in mind that many songs cross categories very effectively. Most titles listed under “preludes” are excellent choices for interludes as well. For instance, Schubert’s “Ave Maria” could be performed either during the prelude or for a candle-lighting. The “Trumpet Tune” by Jeremiah Clarke could serve as an effective processional or recessional. If you have questions about the appropriate placement of a particular song during the ceremony, give us a call.

PRELUDE

Your prelude not only entertains guests as they arrive, it sets the tone for your wedding. Think about choosing a few pieces that convey a mood that matches the style of your ceremony. If traditional classical music seems insincere, go with your instinct and program music close to your heart. Preludes usually begin 20 minutes before the planned start of the ceremony, but we usually will have thirty minutes prepared in case the wedding does not begin on time.

Recommendations: Handel's "Air, from Water Music"; Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" or "Sheep May Safely Graze"; Beethoven's "Ode to Joy."

TRADITIONAL/CLASSIC

1. "A Rose Is Gently Blooming" Op. 122, No. 8, (Johannes Brahms)
2. "Air on the G String" (Johann S. Bach)
3. "Aria, Bist du bei mir" (Be thou near me), BWV 508, (Johann S. Bach)
4. "Perfect Love" (Sir Joseph Barnby)
5. "Rhosymedre" (Ralph Vaughan Williams)
6. "Sheep May Safely Graze" (Johann S. Bach)
7. "Adagio in G Minor" (Albinoni)
8. "Air" from *Water Music* (Handel)
9. "Chorale Prelude" (Bach)
10. "Ode To Joy" (Beethoven)

TRADITIONAL ALTERNATIVES

1. "Air and Chorus" (Lully)
2. "Divertimento" (Haydn)
3. "Nimrod" (Elgar)
4. "Six Dances" (Pezel)
5. "Divertimento" (Mozart)
6. "Three Dances" (Susato)
7. "O Perfect Love" (J. Barnby)
8. "Simple Gifts" (Copland)
9. "Andante Cantabile" (Tchaikovsky)
10. "Jupiter" from *The Planets* (Holst)
11. "Siciliana" from *Water Music* (Handel)
12. "Ye Banks and Braes O' Bonnie Doon" (Grainger)

CONTEMPORARY

1. "Yesterday" (Lennon/McCartney)
2. "Over The Rainbow" (Arlen)
3. "Sunrise, Sunset" from *Fiddler on the Roof* (Bock)
4. "One Hand, One Heart" from *West Side Story* (Bernstein)
5. "I Finally Found Someone" (Streisand)
6. "When I Fall In Love" (M. Carey)
7. "Stand By Me" (King)
8. "Fly Me To The Moon" (Howard)
9. "Unforgettable" (Gordon)
10. "My Funny Valentine" (Rodgers)
11. "Embraceable You" (Gershwin)
12. "Someone to Watch Over Me" (Gershwin)
13. "A Nightingale Sang In Berkley Square" (Sherwin)
14. "My Romance" (Rodgers)

RELIGIOUS/SACRED

1. "Ave Verum Corpus" (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart)
2. "Benediction Nuptiale" (Camille Saint-Saens)
3. "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" (from *Cantata 147*), (Johann S. Bach)
4. "Liebster Jesu, Wir Sind Hier (Blessed Jesus, We Are Here)," BWV 633, (Johann S. Bach)
5. "Praise To The Lord" (Johann G. Walther)
6. "Prelude" on the "Old 110th," (John Joubert)
7. "Oh God, Beyond All Praising" *setting: "Jupiter from The Planets"* (Holst)

PROCESSIONALS

Processional music plays as you and your wedding party make your grand entrance. As on of the most romantic moments in your life, the processional deserves a beautiful and uplifting accompaniment. Most couples opt for the grandeur of a march, but any music will do, so long as it suits the mood and strikes an emotionally charged chord. Don't worry if the traditional "Bridal Chorus" (a.k.a. "Here Comes the Bride") isn't quite your style-- there are many suitable alternatives. In addition to your processional, a separate piece should be selected for your attendants' walk down the aisle. This, or another piece, can be used to seat parents too.

Recommendations: Pachelbel's "Canon in D"; Purcell's "Trumpet Tune" or "Trumpet Voluntary"; "Overture to the Royal Fireworks" by Handel; Holst's "Jupiter, from The Planets."

TRADITIONAL/CLASSIC

1. "Air" from G. F. Handel's *Water Music Suite*
2. "Bridal Chorus" from *Lohengrin* (Richard Wagner)
3. "Canon in D" (Johann Pachelbel)
4. "Procession of Joy" (Hal Hopson)
5. "Rigaudon" (Andre Campra)
6. "Te Deum" (Marc-Antoine Charpentier)
7. "Trumpet Tune" (Henry Purcell)
8. "Trumpet Voluntary" (Henry Purcell)
9. "Trumpet Voluntary" (Jeremiah Clarke)
10. "Trumpet Voluntary" (John Stanley)
11. "Wedding March" from *The Marriage of Figaro* (Mozart)

TRADITIONAL ALTERNATIVES

1. "Canzona per Sonare" (Giovanni Gabrieli)
2. "Coronation March for Czar Alexander III" (Peter I. Tchaikovsky)
3. "Overture" from *Royal Fireworks Music* (George Frederic Handel)
4. "Promenade" from *Pictures at an Exhibition* (Modest Mussorgsky)
5. "Winter" Largo, from *The Four Seasons* (Antonio Vivaldi)

CONTEMPORARY

1. "Sunrise, Sunset" from *Fiddler on the Roof* (Sheldon Harnick & Jerry Bock)
2. "Wedding Processional" from *The Sound of Music* (Rodgers & Hammerstein)

RELIGIOUS/SACRED

1. "All People That On Earth Do Dwell" ("Old 100th" hymn)
2. "Dona Nobis Pacem" (16th century hymn)
3. "St. Anthony's Chorale" (Franz Joseph Haydn)
4. "Hymn Fanfare from The Triumphant" (Francois Couperin)
5. "Scalero de Oro" (traditional Sephardic)

INTERLUDES

A musical interlude by itself is used as a way to further imbue the ceremony with personal symbolic meaning. Most often it is incorporated within important moments such as the lighting of a unity candle. Interludes should be considered entirely optional.

Almost any tune can be appropriate. Most prelude selections listed above work very well as interludes too. "Ave Maria" and Copland's "Simple Gifts" are always crowd pleasers.

TRADITIONAL/CLASSIC

1. "Adagio" (Felix Mendelssohn)
2. "Andantino" (Cesar Franck)
3. "Arioso" (Johann S. Bach)
4. "Au Clair de Lune" (Claude Debussy)
5. "Minuet" from *Berenice* (George F. Handel)
6. "Minuet, Melody" from *Orfeo ed Euriduce* (Christoph W. Gluck)
7. "Romanza" (Ludwig van Beethoven)
8. "Salut D'Amour" (Sir Edward Elgar)
9. "Still, Still With Thee" (Felix Mendelssohn)
10. "The River Is Wide" (Tune: "Waly Waly," traditional English)
11. "Where e'er You Walk" from *Semele* (George F. Handel)
12. "Whither Thou Goest," (Thomas Dewey)

TRADITIONAL ALTERNATIVES

1. "Barcarolle" from *Tales of Hoffman* (Jacques Offenbach)
2. "Pavane" (Gabriel Faure)
3. "Reverie" (Claude Debussy)
4. "Simple Gifts" (traditional Shaker hymn)
5. "The Call" (Vaughan Williams)

CONTEMPORARY

1. "A Simple Song" (Leonard Bernstein)
2. "One Hand, One Heart" from *West Side Story* (Bernstein)

RELIGIOUS/SACRED

1. "All Things Bright and Beautiful" (traditional hymn)
2. "Amazing Grace" (traditional)
3. "Ave Maria" (Johann S. Bach/Charles Gounod)
4. "Ave Maria" (Franz Schubert)
5. "Erhame dich" from *St. Matthew's Passion* (Johann S. Bach)
6. "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" (traditional hymn)
7. "Let the Bright Seraphim" (George F. Handel)
8. "Love Divine, All Love's Excelling" (traditional hymn)
9. "Morning Has Broken" (traditional)
10. "Sanctus" (Gabriel Faure)

RECESSIONAL

Go out with a bang! You can make your exit as dramatic or flamboyant as you want, and after you're pronounced husband and wife, you'll want to follow up with something joyful and festive. Your recessional should inspire your guests to stand up and cheer you on as you hustle down the aisle, clapping their hands till you're out of sight.

Recommended: "Hornpipe" from G. F. Handel's "*Water Music*"; Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" from "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*"; Handel's "La Rejouissance; Mouret's "Rondeau."

TRADITIONAL/CLASSIC

1. "Allegro Maestoso" from *Water Music Suite* (George F. Handel)
2. "Hallelujah Chorus" from *The Messiah* (George F. Handel)
3. "Hornpipe" from *Water Music Suite*, (George F. Handel)
4. "La Rejouissance" from *Royal Fireworks* (George F. Handel)
5. "Ode to Joy" (Ludwig van Beethoven)
6. "Trumpet Tune" (Henry Purcell)
7. "Wedding March" from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Felix Mendelssohn)

TRADITIONAL ALTERNATIVES

1. "Coronation March" from *Crown imperial* (Sir William Walton)
2. "Rondeau" from *Abdelezar* (Henry Purcell)
3. "Rondeau" theme from *Masterpiece Theater* (Jean Joseph Mouret)
4. "Sonata in G Major" (Giuseppe Tartini)
5. "Spring," Allegro, from *The Four Seasons* (Antonio Vivaldi)
6. "The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba" (George F. Handel)
7. "Triumphal March" (Edvard Grieg)

CONTEMPORARY

1. "From This Moment On" (Cole Porter)
2. "Linus & Lucy" the *Peanuts* theme (Vince Guaraldi)
3. "When I'm Sixty-Four" (the Beatles)
4. "When The Saints Go Marching In" (Trad. Dixieland)

POSTLUDE

Planning a postlude is completely optional (you probably wouldn't list it in your program), but if you have a large guest list, you might want to plan about five to ten minutes worth of music following the recessional. The purpose is to make sure all your guests file out of there quickly and head for the reception with high spirits. We like the idea choosing something unique and completely

unrelated to your other ceremony music. The contemporary/jazz selections listed as prelude pieces above work very well here, especially if the prelude music is traditional.

Here are some more options:

1. "Allegro Moderato" (George F. Handel)
2. "Austrian Hymn" (Franz Joseph Haydn)
3. "For The Beauty Of The Earth" (traditional hymn)
4. "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" (William M. Runyan)
5. "Had I Jubal's Lyre" (George F. Handel)
6. "Maestoso Allegro" (Felix Mendelssohn)
7. "Musette's Waltz" from *La Boheme* (Giacomo Puccini)
8. "Now Thank We All Our God" (Sigfried Karg-Elert)
9. "To God Be the Glory" (William H. Doane)

RESOURCE

Wedding Music Expert and Consultant, Carol J. Elliott, Denver, CO

Ceremonial Music Worksheet

Your Name: _____ telephone: _____

Prelude

You have the option of choosing songs for inclusion in the prelude (Brass Unlimited will program additional music to fulfill the time requirements), however, you may wish to instead have us program the prelude entirely. To list additional pieces, use the back of this form.

Check here if you want Brass Unlimited to select music for your prelude, or list pieces below.

1. Title: _____ composer: _____

2. Title: _____ composer: _____

3. Title: _____ composer: _____

Seating of Parents (optional)

You may select a piece specifically for the seating of parents if you wish. It is usually the last piece performed during the prelude; however, some prefer to seat parents with the same music used for the wedding party.

Title: _____ composer: _____

Attendants' Processional

Select a piece for the entrance of bridesmaids, flower girl, etc.

Title: _____ composer: _____

Bridal Processional

Title: _____ composer: _____

Interlude (optional)

List any special music required (e.g. candle lighting, etc.)

Title: _____ composer: _____

Recessional

Title: _____ composer: _____

Postlude (Optional)

Check if you want Brass Unlimited to select one or two pieces for a postlude, or list below.
(Postludes are usually only necessary for large weddings, which take time for people to exit.)

Title: _____ composer: _____